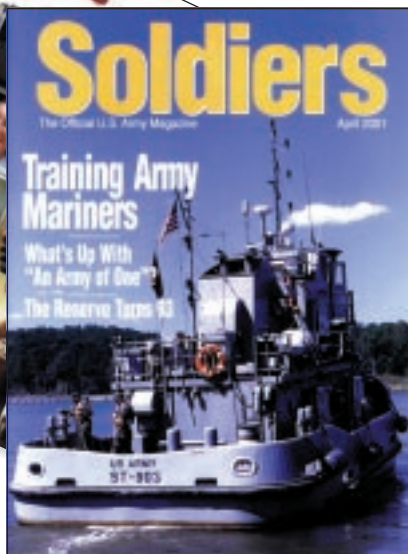
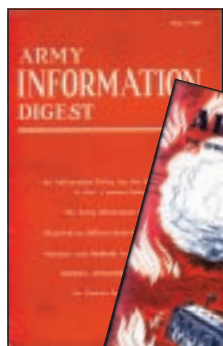


Soldiers
Online

A Story of **CHANGE**

By SFC Lisa Beth Snyder



INFORMATION is a valuable commodity during times of transformation.

For the past 55 years, **Soldiers** and its predecessors, Army Information Digest and Army Digest, have been explaining the “New Army,” “MVA,” “Force XXI” and other stages in the Army’s evolution.

“Soldiers will respond to factual presentation of the Army and of the soldier’s place in it,” said Secretary of War Robert P. Patterson in the December 1946 issue of Army Information Digest. “Too much stress cannot be

placed on that — the necessity of showing the soldier, officer and enlisted man alike, his importance as an individual in the Army.”

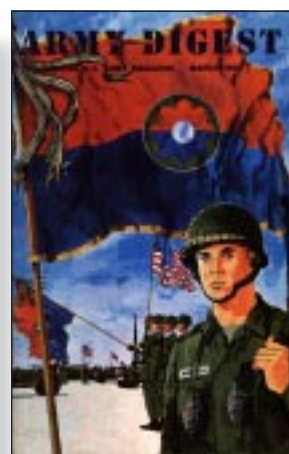
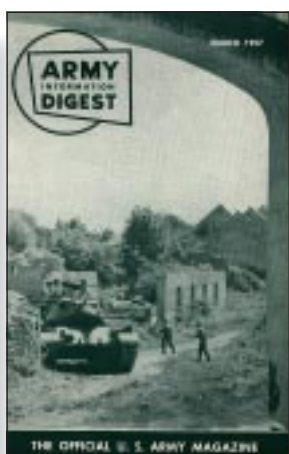
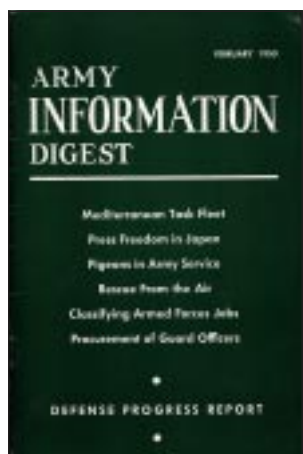
To that end, Army Information Digest presented articles on such topics as manning the post-World War II “New Army,” professional-develop-

ment opportunities and duty-life in Army communities around the world — topics that are still being covered in **Soldiers** today.

Another aspect of the New Army was the unification of the Departments of the Army and Navy with the newly created Department of the Air Force under the new Department of Defense. The magazine sought to educate soldiers about their sister services to foster the new joint spirit of American defense.

During the next 20 years the magazine, which changed its name to Army Digest in June 1966, covered the Berlin Airlift, the Korean War, the successful end to the occupation of the former Axis countries, the thaws and freezes of the Cold War and the Vietnam War.

In June 1971 the magazine changed its name to **Soldiers** “to more effectively communicate with these young enlisted men and women,” MG Winant



Soldiers

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The Official U.S. Army Magazine



Sidle, chief of information, said in the name-change request.

The lead story in the first issue of **Soldiers** was “MVA On the Way,” about the Modern Volunteer Army program to do away with drafting soldiers by July 1973.

“We are ready to rebuild around the familiar themes of pride, discipline, competence, obedience and dedication. But if the existing order is disturbed, a new and meaningful order must replace it; otherwise the Army becomes as unmanageable and useless as a toothpaste tube full of pin holes,” wrote MAJ Peter L. Stomberg, a staff officer with the MVA program.

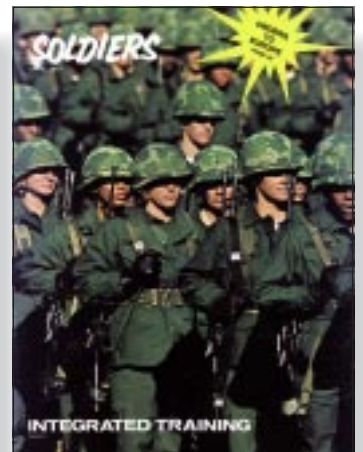


In writing about the success of ending reliance on drafting soldiers, staff writer MSG Nat Dell wrote: “Though enlistees look forward to many benefits, including barrack and living conditions improved over those of five or 10 years ago, the training



they received is every bit as rigorous as that dished out by the old ‘brown boot’ Army.”

In 1989, the Iron Curtain began to crumble until it had turned to dust in 1991. The Army and the other services began to close unneeded bases and



Soldiers

The importance of informing soldiers of the changes in the Army is as key today as it was when outlined by LTG J. Lawton Collins, War Department director of information, in May 1946.

The Official U.S. Army Magazine

reduced the size of the force after winning the 1991 Gulf War.

By 1995 the direction of the post-Cold War Army had a name, Force XXI. "The force will be capable of victory on land across the variety of missions the Army will undoubtedly face," wrote LTC Richard E. Machamer, **Soldiers** editor in chief, in April 1995.

Fourteen months ago, **Soldiers** ran the article "Transforming the Best Army in the World," by MG Joseph M. Cosumano Jr., assistant deputy chief of staff, operations (force development), which explained the capabilities of the Army of the 21st century.

"When the planned transformation is completed, the Army will be a more responsive, deployable, agile, versatile, lethal, survivable and sustainable force capable of responding to missions across the full spectrum of conflict," Cosumano wrote.

In November, the Army chose a

wheeled, light armored vehicle to play a key role in creating a more deployable and more lethal force. And U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command planners are developing ways of integrating new equipment with new "adaptive" training methods

Department director of information, in the May 1946 inaugural issue of **Army Information Digest**.

"There will be no excuse if we permit the exigencies of mobilization to short-circuit our responsibilities for informing the soldier of the over-all

mission and the role he plays in it," wrote Collins, who became the Army's chief of staff three years later.

"They must know 'what makes the Army tick;' they must understand the part played by the unit and the individual in the vast military team; the role of the Army in the nation's welfare; the democratic American principles which the Army must

always be prepared to defend; the place of our nation in the world of tomorrow; and those qualities and characteristics of other nations which will enable the Army to work with them as allies or defeat them as enemies." □



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A Soldiers Timeline

1946 — The Army Information School at Carlisle Barracks, Pa., publishes the first issue of **Army Information Digest** in May, focusing on Army information policy and public affairs.

1951 — **Army Information Digest** moves to Fort Slocum, N.Y., in March.

1954 — The Army's Office of the Chief of Information assumes responsibility for the publication in December and increases emphasis on broad leadership issues.

1961 — SSG Warren LeMon is the first full-time writer assigned to the digest staff.

1947 — AID shifts its focus to Army and national defense policy information.

1953 — Photos are used on the covers for the first time.

1963 — The first full-color photo appears on the September front cover of the digest.

Plastic Money by 2000

By SFC Lisa Beth Snyder

AN October 1981 **Soldiers** article by SFC David S. Greenberg, a member of the Finance Doctrine Task Force, contained several predictions that have come true.

Greenberg's article, "Army Finance in the Year 2000," said that every finance specialist would have a computer terminal to take care of pay problems on the spot. While some changes still go forward to the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, some pay transactions can be handled at the local level, and a few will be able to be changed by the soldier or Army civilian in the near future.

Two of his predictions were even closer to reality today.

"Everybody has been issued an ID card with a magnetic strip on the back," he wrote. He envisioned this

card giving us access to our pay.

A December 2000 Briefings article stated that DOD began issuing "common-access cards" with barcoding, a magnetic strip and an integrated circuit chip to facilitate electronic commerce, allowances and dining facility access, in addition to allowing access to buildings and computers. These cards will eventually hold soldier medical, dental and finance data.

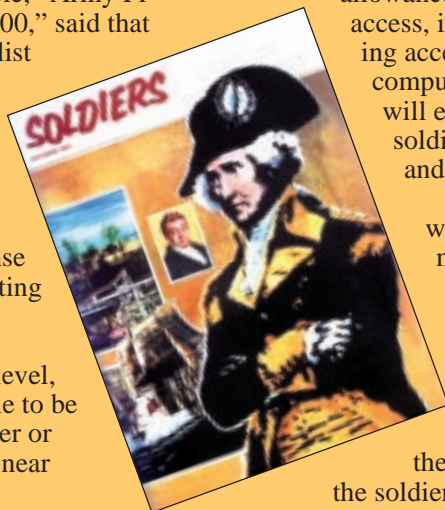
"Maybe cash wouldn't be needed much in the year 2000. The specially designed ID card would be inserted into a computer terminal in the checkout area of the post exchange and the soldier's account would be charged for the amount of purchases," Greenberg wrote.

In 1997, basic trainees at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., began receiving their advance pay on "stored-value

cards" to use at the PX and other post locations. The Army has made this EZPay card a permanent program for all trainees, as was stated in a November 2000 Briefings article.

Soldiers deployed in Bosnia and Hungary are also using reloadable EagleCash cards to make purchases at the camp facilities, the November article stated.

Sometimes those future predictions printed in **Soldiers** come true. □



1966—Name changes to Army Digest and magazine size is increased to 8x10. Editorial content increasingly focuses on soldier issues, and pinups are added to increase readership interest.



1980—The last **Soldiers** pinup appears in the March issue.



1994—**Soldiers Online** website debuts with the July issue.



1996—First almanac issue is published in January.

1998—Hot Topics quarterly inserts debut in November.



1971—Magazine name changes to **Soldiers** in June, and editorial content changes to focus on command information for the entire Army audience.



1978—"Glamour" models and actresses are replaced with pinups of models emphasizing Army issues and career fields. The first male pinup appears in the July issue.

2000—**Soldiers** goes full color in January.